

Proposal to Begin Translation Crowdsourcing at Sunbasket

Sunbasket is a meal delivery company that serves the continental United States. They pride themselves on providing fresh, quality meal ingredients either for cooking at home or “Fresh and Ready” meals that are ready to heat up and eat instantly. They also have “Market” grocery items that can be added to any subscriber’s order. One of Sunbasket’s biggest appeals to customers is their wide variety in meal kit options, which is much greater than most of their competitors and includes paleo, gluten-free, Diabetes-Friendly, and vegetarian options, among others. They’re also one of the only meal delivery services that is certified USDA organic.

Sunbasket’s most immediate need for translation is with training and managing their employees who work on the floor of their distribution centers (DCs) – those who are prepping, sorting, packaging, and packing food for shipment, among other responsibilities. Sunbasket has predominantly Spanish speaking DC employees at their west coast facility, and much more languages spoken at their east coast DC, including Russian, Turkish, Vietnamese, Arabic, Swahili and more. Some employees have a low literacy level in their native language and needless to say, a very low level of English or don’t speak or read English at all. Currently all of Sunbasket’s training materials and employee communications are in English. Sunbasket’s DCs currently rely on fellow employees who speak the same language as an employee needing translation, and have conducted business in this way since opening in 2014. Having translated materials for onboarding, training, and daily employee communications would greatly help reduce employee misunderstandings regarding important procedures and queries. Each week employees need to follow new, detailed recipe instructions while prepping and packing food, and currently there are mistakes sometimes made due to misunderstanding instructions in English. These mistakes can result in customers receiving improperly packaged food, and in worst case scenarios, things that could even be harmful for the customer (such as allergens or expired food items).

Translation crowdsourcing could greatly help Sunbasket with these issues and help them to show employees how much they are valued by the company by giving them materials in their native language. If translation crowdsourcing proves to be a successful and efficient way of translating material for Sunbasket, I would later suggest for the company to consider using this translation method to begin translating their customer-facing recipes, website, and marketing materials to be able to reach a wider, more diverse market than they currently do.

By crowdsourcing translation, Sunbasket would be able to harness the collective talents of translators all over the world and still maintain high linguistic quality by following the guidelines outlined in this proposal, all for a fraction of the cost of hiring professional translators for the same work. Sunbasket has been working hard toward their goal of attaining their initial public offering (IPO) status, and has needed to downsize in both facilities and personnel over the past few years in order to optimize their budget and chances of IPO attainment. Translation crowdsourcing would help Sunbasket to not only show how they are taking steps to reach a wider market (which would greatly help in their quest to reach their IPO), but would also help

them do it in a very cost-effective way. Translation crowdsourcing also increases customer attachment to your products through involvement and grows your fan base.

Recommendations

Getting Started

One of the most important ways to make sure you are attracting and optimizing translator participation is to make the experience easy for them (see attached: “Quantity.pdf”). This means your translation crowdsourcing platform needs to be easy and intuitive to use. I suggest to use the cloud-based translation management system (TMS) [Crowdin](#) to begin. Crowdin allows companies to easily streamline and manage crowdsourcing translations of their multilingual content for an affordable price. Their subscription plans range from free to \$1,500 for large-scale businesses. I layout my plan suggestion in the “Estimated Costs” section of this proposal.

Prioritization of documents

Crowdsourced translators are best motivated when their first projects are short and enjoyable or interesting to translate. Since these translators are volunteers working for free, we want to entice them into working on something enjoyable first and once they’ve had a good and easy/straightforward experience, they are more likely to continue translating longer documents and texts which they may find less interesting, such as legal contracts. This is why I recommend to prioritize Sunbasket documents which are short, like recipes, first on Crowdin, and include longer, less “exciting” texts like legal documents as options further down the line on the platform.

Ensuring Quality

There are many important ways to build and maintain quality even when receiving translations from free volunteers around the globe. Please see the attached document “Quality.pdf” for an illustration of these points. The good news is that Crowdin already employs the majority of these considerations. In summary, these five points will be the most essential to follow:

1. Build a strong foundation
 - a. Onboarding – training videos, tech and linguistic prep, and a subject matter test
2. Maintain good communication with your translators
 - a. Community Managers, a chat or forum, or Help Center for translators
 - b. System for announcements and feedback
3. Employ gamification and voting
 - a. Translators vote on the quality of others’ translations
 - b. Translators get points, awards, or swag (discounts? Market items?) for reaching milestones
4. Provide linguistic support
 - a. Translation Memories and Termbases can be looked up
 - b. Process for QA check
5. Have a post-translation process
 - a. Professional and volunteer reviews

- b. Post Mortem with the team
- c. Ongoing evaluation

Optimizing Quantity of Translation

In order to increase the number of translators that engage with your materials, follow these steps and consult the attached “Quantity.pdf” for more insight:

1. Make it easy
 - a. Free and easy platform to use (Crowdin)
2. Proper motivation
 - a. Gamification, voting, references for their resume
3. Optimize social media use
 - a. Spread the word and recruit translators using popular social media platforms
4. Offer support
 - a. Provide comprehensive onboarding and continuous support
5. Empower users
 - a. Encourage translators to develop libraries, components, apps, or a help center
 - b. The more value they feel they bring, the more likely they are to stay!

Estimated Costs

- Crowdin subscription: \$450 / mo. for Team + plan
 - o For private organizations and comes with 5 managers among many features
- Linguistic development (style guides, glossaries, training videos): \$25 / hour
 - o 40 hours total
- Linguistic review (professional translators/linguists review for QA): \$25 / hour
 - o 40 hours per project
- **Total estimated cost per project, per month: \$2,450**

My recommendation would be for Sunbasket to create a fundraising plan to cover these costs. When funds are raised through fundraising efforts, a company does not feel as great a hit to their budget as when funds come directly from the annual budget itself.

Anticipated Results

Having high quality translations into Sunbasket’s employees’ target languages (to start: Spanish, Vietnamese, Russian, Arabic, Turkish, and Swahili) will not only increase employee trust and satisfaction with Sunbasket, but it will also reduce production errors and, in turn, optimize productivity. The successful implementation of translation crowdsourcing of Sunbasket’s employee literature may also lead to Sunbasket choosing to extend the translation work to their customer-facing recipes, website, and marketing materials. This would allow Sunbasket not only to reach a wider, more diverse customer base than they already do, but also to show potential investors in the company that they are well-prepared for substantial growth.

Sources

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